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ACTION ARA-00

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSC-01 NSAE-00 SY-06 HA-08 L-03 PM-10
PA-01 MCT-03 OMB-01 A-02 SYE-00 USIE-00 SP-02
SNP-01 PRS-01 SLPD-01 SPD-01 /053 W
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P 102111Z JUL 85
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7754
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN//DOI-LAI//

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 05426

CINCSO FOR INTAFF

CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, MARR, AR
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENCE DAY MILITARY PARADE
- IN BUENOS AIRES

1. (U) A LARGELY YOUTHFUL, FAMILY GROUP CROWD ESTIMATED AT 30,000 JOINED PRESIDENT ALFONSIN AND OTHER TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS JULY 9 AT THE FIRST INDEPENDENCE DAY MILITARY PARADE REVIEWED BY A CIVILIAN COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN TWELVE YEARS. SOME 2500 SERVICEMEN PASSED IN REVIEW. THE AIR FORCE IN A BREAK WITH TRADITION LED THE TROOPS ON PARADE (THE AIR FORCE NOW HEADS THE JOINT STAFF) WHILE MILITARY PLANES EXECUTED A FLY-BY OVERHEAD. IT WAS NOTABLE THAT THE CROWD APPLAUDED ALL UNITS AS THEY PASSED, WITH SPECIAL ENTHUSIASM FOR CADETS OF THE THREE FORCES AND A WOMEN'S UNIT.
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2. (C) THE AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS IN ATTENDANCE WERE IMPRESSED BY THE CEREMONY BUT ESPECIALLY BY THE PUBLIC'S RESPONSE TO IT. A DIFFICULT-TO-DEFINE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JAMES F COOPER
DATE/CASE ID: 23 JUN 2009 200901192

MAGIC TINGED THE COLD DAY: MILITARY LEADERS WHO SEEMED NERVOUS AND SOMEWHAT ILL AT EASE AT APPEARING IN UNIFORM IN THE MIDST OF LARGE CROWDS VISIBLY RELAXED WHEN THE PUBLIC'S FAVORABLE REACTION TO THE PARADE BECAME EVIDENT. IN ANOTHER DISTINCTLY UN-ARGENTINE REACTION, ECONOMIC MINISTER JUAN V. SOURROUILLE RECEIVED APPLAUSE AND HANDSHAKES FROM THOSE IN THE CROWD WHO COULD REACH HIM.

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3. (U) THE DAY'S ONLY VIOLENCE INVOLVED THE MADRES DE LA PLAZA DEL MAYO WHO WERE BLOCKED BY POLICE FROM ENTERING THE PLAZA AS PRESIDENT ALFONSIN WALKED FROM THE CASA ROSADA TO CEREMONIES AT THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL. FIVE PEOPLE WERE REPORTED INJURED IN A SLIGHT SCUFFLE. FEW IN THE CROWD KNEW ANY INCIDENT OCCURRED. LATER IN THE DAY HUMAN RIGHTS LEADERS CHARGED THAT RADICAL PARTY ACTIVISTS DELIBERATELY ATTACKED THE MADRES. THE MADRES HAD DIMINISHED INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES LAST YEAR, BY THEIR DEMONSTRATION ON THE CATHEDRAL STEPS.

4. (C) COMMENT: WITH YESTERDAY'S PARADE, ARGENTINA TOOK A STEP TOWARD THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SECTORS WHICH PRESIDENT ALFONSIN URGED IN A JULY 5 SPEECH TO ARMED FORCES LEADERS (SEPTEL). THE ONLY PREVIOUS MILITARY PARADE IN ALFONSIN'S PRESENCE TOOK PLACE IN MENDOZA LAST YEAR ON ARMY DAY. THE LARGE CROWD, WARM RECEPTION GIVEN THE PARTICIPANTS AND ALMOST

COMPLETELY PEACEFUL UNFOLDING OF THE PROGRAM SUGGEST THAT MOST ARGENTINES AGREE WITH THE GOA IN NOT IDENTIFYING THE ARMED FORCES INSTITUTION UNDER A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES CARRIED OUT BY INDIVIDUALS DURING THE JUNTA REGIMES. PRESIDENT ALFONSIN WHO WORE HIS SASH OF OFFICE AND CARRIED HIS BATON PLAYED HIS ROLE AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WITH UNDERSTATED EFFECTIVENESS. ORTIZ